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THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 78/NO. 3 JANUARY 27, 2014

INSIDE

Sankara: 'We know we can count on revolutionary people of Cuba'

— PAGE 8

Help win new readers, long-term subscribers

BY EMMA JOHNSON

In the coming weeks, subscriptions for the close to 3,000 readers who signed up for the *Militant* in the fall campaign will expire. If you are one of them, we urge you to continue reading the working-class press and renew your subscription.

Most of you decided to take out the trial subscription for new readers, $5 for 12 weeks. Some of you took advantage of the special offer on nine books when you signed up. This offer is still available for regular readers. Check out the ad on page 3 and contact a distributor near you.

The purpose of the introductory 12-week offer is to allow new readers the opportunity to follow the paper's coverage of the struggles of workers and farmers, discussion of political questions of crucial importance to working people, and to see the value of continuing to get the socialist newsweekly.

As *Militant* supporters around the

Continued on page 3

Boss negligence poisons water in West Virginia

'Can't drink, wash clothes, brush your teeth'



Getty Images/Tom Hindman

After residents of Charleston, W.Va., spent hours waiting for water truck Jan. 10, supply ran out in 20 minutes. Freedom Industries never reported 7,500 gallon leak of toxins into water supply.

BY EMMA JOHNSON

The uncontrolled consequences of capitalist production came down on 300,000 people in West Virginia Jan. 9, when a chemical spill made their water unusable for days.

"We can't drink the water, we can't cook in it, we can't brew coffee, we can't brush our teeth, we can't wash our clothes," said Kirk Bentley, a surface miner, by phone Jan. 12 from Madison in Boone County. "All we can use it for is flushing the toilet. We can't do the dishes, so we had to go out and get a lot of paper plates and plas-

Continued on page 9

CAPITALISM CHEWS UP WORKERS, SOIL, AIR, WATER

—See editorial page 9

Jobless rate drops without recovery in employment

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Although the Labor Department reported a decline in the unemployment rate in December, actual joblessness remains at the same high level it has been for the past four-and-a-half years of the so-called recovery from the 2007-2009 recession.

Official unemployment figures dropped to 6.7 percent last month from 7 percent in November. This was the result of nothing other than the way government statisticians handle joblessness by not counting those whom they consider have given up looking for work. The number of "discouraged" workers has risen by nearly 2 million over the past year. As this category grows, the unemployment rate is pushed down.

The government also reported that only 74,000 new jobs were created in December, the lowest figure in three years. There are still more than 1 million fewer jobs since the onset of the recession at the end of 2007, according to the *Wall Street Journal*. And if population growth is taken into account, there are 7.8 million fewer jobs available.

"The saving grace may be that winter weather is responsible for some of the sharp decline," stated a Jan. 11 *Journal* editorial, seeking to cast

Continued on page 5

Protests of African refugees spur discussions by workers in Israel



Oren Ziv/Activestills.org

Protests by Eritreans and Sudanese in Israel have won more attention and sympathy to their fight to stay and work in the country free from government detention and other discriminatory measures. Above, Jan. 9 protest in Tel Aviv on fifth day of strike by African workers.

BY SETH GALINSKY

"We used to be scared, but now we are united," Filimon Abraham, a kitchen worker from Eritrea, said from Tel Aviv, Israel, Jan. 11, referring to protests by African refugees against detentions and other efforts by the Israeli government to force them out of the country.

"Protests will not help. Strikes will not help," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in a statement Jan. 5. "We are determined to remove the illegal infiltrators."

Some 20,000 marched in Tel Aviv Jan. 5, the first day of a refugees' protest strike, chanting "We are not criminals, we are not infiltrators, we are refugees." The march was followed by daily actions over the next four days, including a Jan. 8 demonstra-

Continued on page 6

Boycott of Israel weakens fights of Palestinians, workers

— See commentary p. 7

London inquest whitewashes cop's killing of Mark Duggan

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON — More than 500 people demonstrated outside Tottenham police station in north London Jan. 11. Joined by scores of residents who lined nearby sidewalks in this working-class neighborhood, they protested the "lawful killing" verdict of an inquest jury into the 2011 police shooting of Mark Duggan.

Duggan, who was unarmed, was shot twice by an unnamed cop Aug. 4, 2011, after the taxi Duggan was riding in was stopped by officers from a special unit. Seen by many as an execution, the killing sparked protests and riots across the country. The jury ruled the cop's shooting was lawful, but did not dispute that Duggan was not wielding a gun.

"The fight goes on for as long as it takes. We're in it for the long haul," said Carole Duggan, his aunt and the main speaker at the protest. "This is not just about Mark. There's no justice in this country."

Sharing the platform at the rally was Rupert Sylvester, whose son Roger was killed by police in Tottenham 15 years ago. The killing was initially ruled unlawful by an inquest, only to be overturned by a High Court judge.

Rally chair Stafford Scott, coordinator of Tottenham RIGHTS, reviewed a long list of prominent cases of deaths in police custody, including

Continued on page 2

Also Inside

Inquest backs killing by cop

Continued from front page
Cynthia Jarrett in 1985, Joy Gardner in 1993, Roger Sylvester in 1999, Jean Charles de Menezes in 2005 and Ian Tomlinson in 2009.

According to INQUEST, a charity that focuses on deaths in police custody, 1,476 people have died as a result of police action since 1990. But the last time a cop was successfully prosecuted for killing someone was in 1969.

"We may have got some solace if Mark Duggan had been the last, but since his killing there have been others," Scott said. A close friend of Leon Briggs, who died in police custody in Luton Nov. 4, joined the platform.

"Don't give up," Marcia Rigg, sister of Sean Rigg, who died in police custody in 2008, told participants. "Sean's case has now been reopened" as a result of the ongoing public fight.

Rigg's message was echoed by Becky Shah, whose mother was among 96 Liverpool football supporters killed at a 1989 match in Sheffield as a result of police misconduct. After two decades of campaigning, the cover-up of cops' responsibility for what is known as the Hillsborough disaster was exposed in a 2012 public inquiry report.

After the shooting of Duggan, the government-appointed Independent Police Complaints Commission said Duggan had shot first. The truth started coming out shortly afterward, heightening distrust of the commission among working people.

Police told the inquest that Duggan was a member of a gang, the "Tottenham Man Dem" that includes "48 of Europe's most violent criminals." The cops said they were following the cab Duggan was in because they believed he was carrying a gun related to a drug deal. The police rammed and boxed in the cab with three police vehicles. Duggan was shot after he got out of the cab.

A cop, called "V53" to conceal his identity, told the inquest that he shot Duggan twice believing in a "freeze-frame moment" that Duggan was an armed threat.

The only nonpolice witness told the inquest that Duggan had his arms raised when he was shot.

The jury concluded that Duggan probably had a gun, but had thrown it away before getting out of the cab. No witness said they saw Duggan throw anything away.

Police say they recovered a gun 10 to 20 feet from the cab. But no DNA, blood or fingerprint evidence linking it to Duggan was found.



Militant/Jonathan Silberman

"This is not just about Mark," said his aunt Carole Duggan. "There's no justice in this country."



Militant/Jonathan Silberman

Hundreds protest outside police station in Tottenham neighborhood of north London against inquest ruling that shooting of Mark Duggan by cop in August 2011 was "lawful killing."

London Mayor Boris Johnson expressed sympathy to Duggan's family, while paying tribute to the police for their "high professional standards."

"The majority of people in this country know that he was executed," Carole Duggan told the press outside the courtroom after the decision.

Contract signing 'bonus' turned over to build party

Carole Lesnick and Eric Simpson in San Francisco, members of the Machinists Union at United Airlines, recently sent in "blood money" donations for a total of $725.28 to the Socialist Workers Party Capital Fund, which finances long-range work of the party. Blood money is a term to describe bonuses and other bribes used by bosses to press us to accept wage cuts, dangerous work conditions and speedup. Below is a note Simpson sent in with his contribution.

I just put a money order in the mail for the Capital Fund. The money represents a lump-sum payment from the recent contract settlement, a smaller signing bonus and the November productivity bribe.

The signing bonus was a straight-up bribe to sweeten approval of a take-back contract. The lump-sum payment was a far more effective bribe masquerading as retroactive pay. It was calculated as a percentage based on hours worked over a worker's years of service since the expiration of the last contract.

Some workers got thousands of dollars; some were dissatisfied with the amount they were given, since there was a cap to the payouts.

I showed the money order around at work, along with the *Militant* column on the IAM fraction's previous Capital Fund contributions. The discussions were interesting. Several people agreed that the lump sum was a bribe to win contract ratification, and were proud to have been part of the minority that voted against the contract.

To make a blood money contribution to the Socialist Workers Party Capital Fund, contact Militant *distributors listed on page 8.*

THE MILITANT

If you like this paper, don't miss an issue!

Nearly 3,000 people signed up to receive the 'Militant' by mail during the recent subscription drive. If you are one of them and like what you've been reading, then don't forget to renew. If you don't have a subscription, sign up for the special offer and try it out.



Militant/Jacquie Henderson

Truck driver Jorge Vega, left, renews *Militant* subscription when supporters of socialist paper knock on his door in March.

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The Militant

Vol. 78/No. 3

Closing news date: January 15, 2014

Editor: Doug Nelson

Editorial volunteers: Tom Baumann, Róger Calero, Naomi Craine, Seth Galinsky, Eleanor García, Emma Johnson, Jacob Perasso, John Studer, Brian Williams, Rebecca Williamson.

Published weekly except for one week in January, one week in July, one week in August and two weeks in September.

Business manager: Lea Sherman

The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018. **Telephone:** (212) 244-4899
Fax: (212) 244-4947

E-mail: themilitant@mac.com

Website: www.themilitant.com

Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

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Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant*'s views. These are expressed in editorials.

Expand ‘Militant’ readership

Continued from front page
world continue to go door to door in working-class neighborhoods and to participate in labor battles and political activities, seeking to win new subscribers, they will also be getting in touch with those of you whose subscriptions are running out, to see what you think about the paper and to help as many as possible to renew.

“We have been making a consistent effort to get back to all subscribers to make sure they receive the paper and know about the book specials,” reported Katy LeRougetel from Montreal Jan. 13.

On Jan. 8, LeRougetel and Félix Vincent Ardea met with Alexis Lafleur, a University of Montreal student who took out a subscription in November and got the French-language edition of *Thomas Sankara Speaks*.

“Experiences like the one in Burkina Faso should be an example for workers all over the world,” he said. “In fact, it’s because of Pathfinder’s efforts to circulate such books that I decided to subscribe to the *Militant*.”

Lafleur wanted to know more about an upcoming showing at his university of “I Will Die the Way I Lived,” an exhibit of watercolors by Antonio Guerrero, one of the Cuban Five. He bought *The Cuban Five: Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, Why They Should Be Free* to prepare to build a Feb. 6 panel presentation on the fight to free the Five.

Guerrero’s watercolors will also show in Minneapolis from Feb. 4 until Feb. 28 (see ad on page 5 for both exhibits.)

“We’ve continued going door to door,” Tom Fiske said by phone from Minneapolis Jan. 14. “During the drive we reached out much broader into the city and got to know it better. So now we keep going, finding new areas that we try out. Last weekend we did sales in the area where the exhibit is going to be.”

“We’ve also organized work to win renewals and promote the books on special,” Fiske said. “Every Wednesday evening we get together and organize to contact subscribers and set up meetings with them.” Out of this effort a worker at American Crystal Sugar in North Dakota, where workers fought a 22-month lockout from 2011 to 2013, just sent in a one-year renewal.

“Can I receive *The Communist Manifesto* as advertised in *Militant* no. 46?” wrote a prisoner in Texas when he sent in the slip for his six-month renewal. “I have been trying hard to receive this publication and so far no luck. It has been an eye opener to the world and now I will soon be part of it.”

During the drive, the *Militant* expanded its readership among fellow workers behind bars. Many inmates show the paper around and help to win new readers.

“I would be thankful to be added to your mailing list,” a prisoner in Pennsylvania wrote. “Another inmate shared a few of his issues with me and I was impressed by both the content and the quality.”

Follow the example of the fellow worker behind bars in Pennsylvania and join the effort to further expand the readership of the paper. To get a subscription or renew, contact a distributor in your area listed on page 8 or the Militant at (212) 244-4899 or themilitant@mac.com.

You can also mail in the renewal form that comes with your subscription’s last three issues.

Saudi government carries out mass deportations



Reuters/Faisal Al Nasser

Some 1 million migrant workers have been forced out of Saudi Arabia since March last year as part of a “Saudization” campaign by the monarchy. Above, an Ethiopian worker argues with a Saudi cop Nov. 11 as he and others await deportation.

In addition to 150,000 workers from Ethiopia, 400,000 from Yemen, and more than a 100,000 from India, hundreds of thousands from other countries, including Bangladesh, Philippines, Nepal and Pakistan have been deported.

The labor law was changed in March to oblige bosses to hire a certain percentage of Saudis or face financial penalties. Official Saudi unemployment is already 12 percent, and is estimated to be double that among the two-thirds of the population who are under 30.

Non-Saudi workers were given until Nov. 4 to “fix their status” or be subject to deportation. Non-Saudi workers are tied to the boss who sponsored them under an onerous form of contract labor common in the oil kingdoms of the Arabian Peninsula that is designed to stunt the development of a hereditary proletariat and prevent labor organization.

Saudi Arabia has 30 million residents, more than 9 million are noncitizens without rights. After the U.S., it is the world’s second biggest source of remittances from migrant workers sending money home.

— EMMA JOHNSON

—*MILITANT LABOR FORUMS*—

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ILLINOIS
Chicago
From Cambodia to the U.S.: Fight for a Higher Minimum Wage, Safety, Unions. Speaker: Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Jan. 17, 7:30 p.m. *806 W. Washington Blvd., Room 202. Tel.: (312) 055-0111.*

IOWA
Des Moines
The Fight Against Police Brutality and Torture. Speaker: John Hawkins, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Jan. 25, 7:30 p.m. *3707 Douglas Ave. Tel.: (515) 707-1779.*

NEW YORK
Manhattan
Class Struggle and Social Contradictions in Israel Today. Speaker: Lea Sherman, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Jan. 24, 7:30 p.m. *545 Eighth Ave., between 37th and 38th St., Room 1410. Tel.: (212) 629-6649.*

NEW ZEALAND
Auckland
Nelson Mandela and the Democratic Revolution in South Africa. Speaker; Mike Tucker, Communist League. Fri., Jan. 24, 7 p.m. Donation: $5 waged, $2 unwaged. *4/125 Grafton Road. Tel.: (09) 369-1223.*

Kenneth Edelin: Champion of rights of women, Blacks

Doctor defended right to abortion, beat back frame-up

BY SUSAN LAMONT

Kenneth Edelin, a Boston physician and life-long champion of women's rights who gained national attention through a successful fight against an anti-abortion frame-up, died of cancer Dec. 30 at age 74.

In 1973 — the same year of the Supreme Court's Roe v. Wade ruling that decriminalized abortion — Edelin became the first African-American to serve as chief resident in Obstetrics and Gynecology at Boston City Hospital. Two years later he was charged with manslaughter over an abortion and convicted in a trial marked by racist bigotry. His defense campaign became intertwined with the fight for Black rights and school desegregation that was raging in the city at that time, strengthening both the struggles for women's emancipation and against racist discrimination.

The attack on Edelin was led by local Democratic Party politicians, along with local Catholic Church figures, Massachusetts Citizens for Life and other forces, some of which also helped mobilize sometimes violent protests aimed at blocking school desegregation. Area-wide busing had been ordered by federal Judge Arthur Garrity in 1974 under the reverberating impact of the working-class struggle for Black rights that had overthrown Jim Crow segregation less than a decade earlier.

"Abortion should not be permitted under any circumstances despite the decision of the United States Supreme Court," Raymond Flynn, Democratic state representative from South Boston and a leader of the racist anti-busing drive, wrote in a letter reprinted in the Boston *Real Paper*.

Edelin was one of only two doctors at Boston City Hospital who volunteered to perform abortions, sometimes working overtime and Saturdays without pay.

In April 1974 Edelin was indicted for manslaughter based on an abortion he had performed on a young Black woman. He was convicted in February 1975 and sentenced to one year probation.

The prosecution charged that in performing an abortion by hysterectomy, Edelin had deprived "a baby boy" of oxygen while it was "being born." Edelin testified that the fetus was not viable, estimating that his patient's pregnancy was at most 22 weeks along.

Michael Ciano, an alternate juror from East Boston, shed light on the racist character of the frame-up when he told the press about comments by a number of jurors, all of whom, including Ciano, were Caucasian. "That n----r is as guilty as sin," said one, according to Ciano.

"The anti-abortion forces didn't just stumble onto this case," Edelin told the *Boston Globe*. "They had been watching me for about two years." Edelin became a target when he and a few other doctors were featured in an article on fetal research in the *New England Journal of Medicine* in June 1973.

In September 1973 Edelin drew attention for speaking out in defense of a woman's right to choose abortion at a city council hearing organized for the benefit of "right to life" groups.

At the same time Edelin was indicted, four of those participating in the fetal research project were charged under an 1814 statute against "grave robbing" and "illegal dissection."

'I believe in a woman's right'

"I believe very strongly in a woman's right to determine what happens to her body," Edelin told the *Boston Phoenix* at the time. "During illegal abortions, many women died. And many women suffered. And the problem is, the women who died are poor women, and mainly black women."

Evonne Gilbert, the woman who had the abortion, volunteered to testify for Edelin. "I was grateful for the offer," he wrote years later, "but decided that her privacy was more important than having her take the witness stand."

Buoyed by Edelin's conviction, capitalist politicians and hospital administrators in other states took steps to restrict abortions.

On Feb. 17, 1975, two days after Edelin's conviction, supporters of women's rights responded with a march of 2,000 through downtown Boston.

Boston NAACP President Thomas Atkins, a leader of the Boston school desegregation battle, condemned the conviction in a Feb. 20 news conference and called on NAACP chapters around the country to defend Edelin: "The weight of the evidence in the case was so overwhelmingly on the side of the doctor that we can only explain the verdict as having been motivated either by religious bias, racial bias, or both."

The *Philadelphia Tribune* and other Black community newspapers spoke out against the verdict. "In the two years since the Supreme Court's historic ruling, deaths resulting from abortion operations have declined by 81 per cent, but Dr. Edelin's conviction may force many women back into the arms of the quacks and butchers who used to snuff out women's lives in backrooms and dark alleys," a Feb. 22 *Tribune* editorial stated.



Above, Dr. Kenneth Edelin speaks to supporters of women's right to choose March 9, 1975, after frame-up conviction on manslaughter for performing abortion. Left, Edelin is welcomed back as chief resident of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Boston City Hospital day after conviction, which was overturned in 1976.

Edelin fight gains broad support

In the weeks and months that followed, a broad defense campaign was launched to demand Edelin's conviction be overturned. Public meetings, rallies and other protests won national attention and support.

On May 3, 1975, 1,000 supporters marched to the Massachusetts Statehouse, chanting "Defend Dr. Edelin, defend abortion rights."

The demonstration culminated a week of activities called by the Coalition to Defend Abortion Rights. "The week of activity has been publicized through large-scale leafleting, appearances on numerous radio talk shows, articles in all the major press, and even a booth at Jordan Marsh, Boston's largest department store," the *Militant* reported.

A few weeks earlier, the racist anti-desegregation outfit ROAR — "Restore Our Alienated Rights" — had broken up a rally at Boston's Faneuil Hall in support of the Equal Rights Amendment — a proposed constitutional amendment prescribing equal rights for women that never passed — and threatened to do the same to future actions in defense of women's right to choose.

"If you're really for women's rights you have to be against forced busing," a ROAR leader said after the attack.

But broad support for the May 3 rally combined with well-organized marshaling by demonstrators resulted in a successful action with no disruptions.

The public campaign to defend Edelin continued until his conviction was overturned by the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court in 1976.

Edelin remained a staunch proponent of women's right to abortion. He became chairman of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Boston University, serving until 1989, while also director of Ob-Gyn at Boston City Hospital and managing director of the Roxbury Comprehensive Community Health Center in Boston's Black community.

Edelin served as chairman of Planned Parenthood Federation of America from 1989 to 1992. During his tenure, he wrote in 2007, the group "fought back with marches, demonstrations and promised that we would not allow ourselves to be censored."

In 2007 he published the story of the fight against his frame-up, *Broken Justice: A True Story of Race, Sex and Revenge in a Boston Courtroom*.

"For me, the struggles for reproductive rights for women and Civil Rights for African-Americans are intertwined and at the same time parallel," Edelin wrote. "The denial of these two rights is an attempt by some to control the bodies of others. Both are forms of slavery. We must never let slavery in any form return to America."

"The rights of women to make choices about their pregnancies and doctors to be able to offer their patients the most appropriate care continues to be under attack," he wrote at the end of the book. "Recent Supreme Court rulings have further restricted a woman's right to choose."



Demonstration in Boston Dec. 14, 1974, demanding desegregation of public schools. Democratic Party leaders used City Hall to mobilize racist forces in pitched battles to stop busing at same time as they organized attack against Edelin and women's right to choose abortion.

No recovery of jobs

Continued from front page

these figures in the best light.

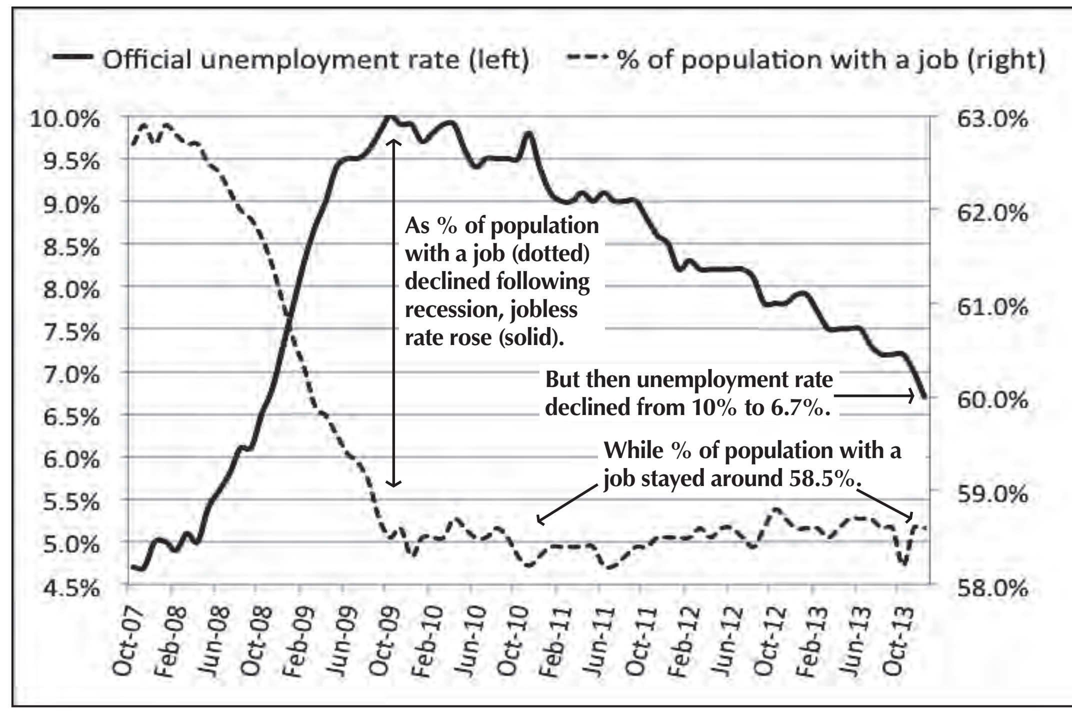
But the weather, besides resulting in a decline in construction jobs, doesn't have much to do with the years of stagnant employment facing working people. Bosses are not expanding investment in production and hiring workers because under current conditions it would be less profitable for them to do so. At the heart of the problem is a long-term tendency toward declining rates of industrial profit, which has led to a slowdown in capitalist production and trade on a world scale.

The percentage of the population with a job in December was 58.6 percent — around the same level it has hovered at since it sharply declined from 63 percent in 2007.

As of December nearly 92 million adults are not counted in the labor force, a figure that has risen by 11.2 million over the past five years.

Long-term unemployment remains at record-high levels. Nearly 38 percent of those receiving unemployment benefits have been out of work for more than six months. Each week that Congress debates whether to provide federal jobless benefits, another 72,000 workers will see their benefits end as state compensation expires. This is in addition to the 1.3 million jobless workers who stopped getting federal benefits Jan. 1.

Under these conditions, bosses have been driving against wages and working conditions. With a 2-cent hourly increase in workers' paychecks in December, wages rose just 1.8 percent for the year, a decline in real wages given rising energy and food prices. During the recession, median household income declined by $1,006, according to Sentier Research. Since the recession ended in June 2009, it has dropped by another $2,535.



Because unemployment rate doesn't count jobless workers Labor Department says have given up, rate has declined over last four years, despite lack of any real recovery. At same time figures mask jobs crisis, they also point to real trend: over time discouraged workers do drop out of workforce, which begins to shrink.

State gov'ts chip away at women's right to abortion

BY JOHN STUDER

Since the U.S. Supreme Court Roe v. Wade decision decriminalized abortion in 1973, opponents of women's rights have chipped away at access to the procedure. In 1976, Congress passed the Hyde Amendment, which barred use of federal funds for abortion under Medicaid. This law has been renewed repeatedly and was recently extended to private insurance plans women can purchase under Obamacare.

State legislatures have imposed waiting periods, mandatory ultrasound exams, parental notification for young women, requirements that abortion providers have admitting privileges in nearby hospitals and that their clinics meet all the standards of ambulatory surgical facilities, shortened the time period in which abortion is legal, restricted medication abortion, and more.

Over the past three years, such efforts have increased. From 2011 to 2013, state legislatures passed 205 new restrictions on access to abortion rights, as opposed to 189 enacted in the decade before.

These attacks have especially restricted access for working-class women and those in rural areas. Some 87 percent of all counties, and 97 percent of those in rural areas, have no abortion facilities.

There have been few mass street mobilizations against these attacks, leaving opponents of women's rights with the initiative. At the same time, recent polls show around 70 percent continue to back the right.

Some of the most onerous restrictions have been struck down. On Jan. 13 the Supreme Court let stand an appeals court ruling overturning an Arizona state law that criminalized virtually all abortions after 20 weeks of gestation, which the lower court said violated Roe v. Wade's "unalterably clear" language.

Help fund Egypt reporting trip

Worker-correspondents are preparing for a trip to Egypt to report on challenges and struggles of working people there and to help staff a booth for Pathfinder Press at the 45th Cairo International Book Fair Jan. 22-Feb. 4 featuring titles in Arabic, Farsi, English and other languages.

The team will include members and supporters of the communist movement in the U.S., U.K., Canada, Greece and Lebanon.

They will visit working-class areas in Cairo and other cities, meet with unionists and farmers about strikes, lockouts and other struggles they are involved in, and about conditions in the country today. They will send back first-hand reports to be run in the *Militant* on the efforts of workers and farmers there to defend and use political space.

The Cairo Book Fair is the largest yearly cultural event in the Middle East. Last year 1.7 million people visited the fair from Egypt and 24 other countries.

The *Militant* is appealing for funds from readers who want to help defray the substantial costs of the trip and make possible similar reporting trips in the future. Contributions can be sent to the *Militant*, 306 W. 37th St., 13th floor, New York, NY, 10018.

— JOHN STUDER

Showings of paintings by Antonio Guerrero, one of the Cuban Five

I Will Die the Way I Lived



Exhibits

Minneapolis, Minn.

February 4-28

Opening reception: Fri., Feb. 7, 6 p.m. Regla de Oro — Art Gallery and Fair Trade Gifts, 2743 Lyndale Ave. S. Tel.: (612) 866-1247; (612) 378-7134. Exhibition schedule: Tue.-Fri., 12PM-7PM; Sat., 11AM-7PM.; Sun., 11AM-4 PM

Montreal, Canada

Thurs., Feb. 6, 5 p.m

"Art and Liberation." Université de Montréal, 3200, Jean-Brillant, Room B-3260. Speakers: Alain González González, Cuban consul general; Claude Morin, honorary professor; Félix Vincent Ardea, student; Catinca Adriana Stan, teaching assistant. Tel.: (438) 822-9500.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

THE MILITANT

January 27, 1989

The efforts of Latin American governments to keep up interest payments on the $430 billion they owe to financial institutions in the imperialist countries are creating a social and economic catastrophe for working people. This was driven home by two recent events — the attack by Mexico's government on the oil workers' union and the imposition by Brazil's government of new, anti-working-class austerity measures.

Driving down the standard of living of workers and farmers in Latin America makes it easier for the employers to step up attacks on wages, living standards, and union rights elsewhere.

The labor movement and farmers' organizations around the world need to throw their full backing behind the working people of Latin America in the defensive struggles they are waging. We should join them in demanding that the unpayable and inhuman debt be canceled now.

THE MILITANT

January 27, 1964

A general strike that paralyzed Cuzco, Peru's third largest city; increasing conflicts and arrests as peasants occupy large landed estates; an agrarian reform bill bogged down in Peru's parliament; and a vote of no-confidence in the governing party's prime minister. Such are the powerful repercussions on Peru's political life of the Indian peasants' growing demand for "Land or Death."

Cuzco, ancient Inca capital, was shaken Dec. 20 by a militant 24-hour general strike. The strikers' central demand was the release of Hugo Blanco and 60 other peasant leaders held prisoners by the government, according to an *Agence France Presse* report.

Cuzco's general strike, organized by a united front of peasant, student and workers' organizations, underscored a hunger strike by imprisoned peasant leaders, including Blanco.

SOCIALIST APPEAL

January 28, 1939

OMAHA, Neb. — When an irresistible union meets an "immovable" boss group, then either the boss group moves, or goes broke. That's the way the cards lay on the table in the epic 20-week battle between the Omaha General Drivers Union 554 (Irresistible!) and the Omaha Business Men's Association.

The nonunion boss operators must face the fact that they no longer represent a majority of their own industry. Within the Omaha region, 68 percent of the over-the-road motor freight industry have signed up.

The significance of this strike would be difficult to overestimate. It opens up another inland empire to the entering wedge of militant union organization. That this significance is realized by unions throughout the entire 11-state area is proved by the cash-on-the-line contributions as well as fraternal greetings to the besieged strikers which are pouring in.

Refugees' fight in Israel

Continued from front page

tion of 10,000 in Jerusalem in front of the Knesset, Israel's parliament.

Since 2006 nearly 36,000 Eritreans and 15,000 Sudanese have entered Israel from Egypt's Sinai desert, fleeing repressive regimes in their home countries. Because it does not have diplomatic relations with Sudan, the Israeli government can't legally deport the Sudanese. Repression in Eritrea is so widely recognized that it is politically difficult to deport Eritreans.

At first Israeli authorities issued temporary visas and gave them bus tickets to Tel Aviv.

"They didn't give us permits to work or anyplace to live. We learned Hebrew, got jobs, paid rent on our own," Abraham said. Hotel, restaurant and cleaning companies welcomed the Africans as a source of cheap labor. "If they hire Israelis they will have to pay them a lot more salary," Abraham said. "That's why they want to use us."

In June 2012 the Knesset passed a law allowing the government to imprison migrants for three years. The government began building a 140-mile-long high-tech fence to keep the Africans out. The number of new arrivals dropped from about 2,000 a month at the beginning of 2012 to 34 in the first six months of 2013.

The Israeli Supreme Court struck down the law in September 2013, saying that three years was too long. The law that replaced it allows the government to jail refugees for up to a year and to hold them indefinitely in so-called open detention facilities, such as Holot in the Negev desert, where detainees have to be present for three roll calls during the day and return every evening.

"The government says the open detention is not a jail. If they need to check on me every couple of hours, if I can't move where I want, then I'm in jail," Noury Musa, a pastry kitchen worker from Sudan who works at a Dead Sea resort, said in a phone interview.

"The Knesset members from Meretz [a social-democratic political party] said from the Knesset podium that 'nothing would happen to the State of Israel if it took in those 53,000 people,'" Interior Minister Gideon Sa'ar told *Hayom* daily. "I disagree with people who hold that view. As far as Jewish identity and the desire to blur it are concerned, whether or not that is the intention of those who support the foreigners, that will be the result."

The protests and latest government measures, including ordering more of the refugees to go to Holot, have sparked a nationwide debate. *Hayom* published a poll saying that 61 percent of Jewish Israelis want the Africans deported and only 11.6 percent think they should be allowed to live and work in Israel.

"I think half the country is for us and half don't want the refugees," Mohamed Salih, a Sudanese leader of the protests from Arad, told the *Militant*. "Students from Ben Gurion University and from Tel Aviv University say they stand with the refugees. Many Israelis have gone to Holot to bring them food and clothing."

Salih described talking to a Jewish taxi driver who backs the anti-refugee measures. "'The Asian workers come here with a five-year work contract,' the taxi driver told me. 'Then they go back home. But you Africans want to stay here forever,'" Salih said.

"If they are refugees, fine. But most come to make quick money, many are criminals," Haim Sahar, a leader of a recently successful Histadrut organizing drive at Pelephone cellphone company, said from outside Tel Aviv Jan. 12. The detention center is a shelter, Sahar said. "Inside you have education, doctors, food. They should say 'thank you.'"

The Histadrut, the largest union federation in the country with close ties to the government, has not taken a position on the refugee question.

"We support the asylum-seekers as a human rights issue," Shay Cohen, an organizer for Koach La Ovdim, a union federation founded in 2007, told the *Militant* Jan. 13. "It's also a labor issue. Workers without work permits are used as a weapon against Israeli workers and the solution is solidarity with their struggle for equal rights. They should be issued work visas and be able to join the union."

Range of views

Cohen is part of an organizing drive among ultra-orthodox Jewish workers at a chicken processing plant. "They hold a wide range of views, from very hostile to solidarity with the African asylum-seekers," he said. "It's interesting everyone feels free to discuss these things."

Many of the African refugees work side by side with Jewish and Palestinian workers. "Most of the workers in the pastry kitchen are Russian Jews, but I also have co-workers who are Arabs," Musa said. "Many co-workers have called me and asked if they can help me in anyway."

"Israel has absorbed tens of thousands of Ethiopian Jews," Hashem Mohameed, a former member of the Knesset who is Palestinian from the Arab town of Umm al-Fahm, said by phone Jan. 11. "Israel doesn't need to push these refugees away, they can let them live here."

"In our heads Palestinians all believe the Sudanese and Eritreans are right. But few of us would join the protests, we have our own problems," he said.

After the government declared an official mourning period following the Jan. 11 death of former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, leaders of the Sudanese and Eritrean community put a hold on further demonstrations.

"About 50 percent of us have gone back to work," Salih said. "Many people have financial problems, they need to pay rent." Some were fired when they tried to return to work, he said.

Sudanese and Eritrean workers are discussing their next steps.

"They want us to leave," Musa said. "So to where? I am not going to endanger my life again."

'Humor from My Pen' in New Zealand, now in Wellington



Militant/Patrick Brown

WELLINGTON, New Zealand — More than 40 people packed into the Deluxe Café Jan. 10 for the opening here of the exhibition of political cartoons by Gerardo Hernández, one of the Cuban Five. The exhibition, titled "Humor from My Pen," has been touring this country for more than two years, helping to build support for the campaign to free the Five.

"The new year marks the 55th anniversary of the triumph of the Cuban Revolution," said Cuban Ambassador Maria del Carmen Herrera, at right in left photo, who welcomed participants. The last 55 years of revolution have seen achievements that have benefited the Cuban people, and relentless efforts by Washington to overturn them, Herrera said. She encouraged support for the International Commission of Inquiry into the Case of the Cuban Five, to be held in London March 7-8.

— JANET ROTH

Who are the Cuban Five?



Fernando González, Gerardo Hernández, Antonio Guerrero, Ramón Labañino and René González are Cuban revolutionaries who during the 1990s accepted assignments from the Cuban government to gather information on the operations and plans of Cuban-American paramilitary groups based in southern Florida. These rightist outfits, organizing on U.S. soil with virtual impunity, have a long record of carrying out bombings, assassinations and other deadly attacks, both against targets in Cuba and supporters of the Cuban Revolution in the United States, Puerto Rico and elsewhere.

On Sept. 12, 1998, the five were arrested by the FBI. They were framed up and convicted on a variety of charges, which included acting as unregistered agents of the Cuban government and possession of false identity documents. Without a shred of evidence, three were charged with "conspiracy to gather and transmit national defense information."

Hernández was also convicted of conspiracy to commit murder, based on the pretext that he bore responsibility for the Cuban government's 1996 shootdown of two Brothers to the Rescue aircraft that had invaded Cuban airspace in disregard of Havana's repeated warnings. He is serving two life terms plus 15 years. His wife Adriana Pérez is barred from entering the United States.

The frame-up and continued incarceration of the Five is part of Washington's decades-long campaign to punish the working people of Cuba for making and defending their socialist revolution.

René González returned to Cuba in May 2013, halfway through his parole.

Israel boycott weakens fights of Palestinians, workers

False apartheid analogy distracts from real class struggle in Israel, Palestinian territories

BY SETH GALINSKY

The Dec. 15 vote by the American Studies Association to endorse a boycott of Israeli academic institutions has been hailed as a victory by those who see the boycott, divestment and sanctions campaign as a way to force the Israeli government to end its occupation of Arab lands, obtain full equality for Palestinians in Israel, and win the right of return for Palestinians who lost their homes in Israel. However, the boycott campaign is an obstacle to these and other fights by working people in Israel and the Palestinian territories.

COMMENTARY

The Association for Asian American Studies backed the boycott in April and the Modern Language Association debated the question at its Chicago convention this month.

Leaders of the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel contend that Israel is the world's unique pariah nation today, similar to the white-supremacist apartheid state of South Africa that was overthrown in the early 1990s. They say their effort is modeled on the campaign for international sanctions against apartheid but they say nothing about the mass struggle organized by the African National Congress, which was the key to the democratic revolution in South Africa.

While the expression "Israeli apartheid" has become accepted by some who support the Palestinian struggle, the analogy is false.

Both apartheid South Africa and Israel have roots as settler colonies and bulwarks of imperialism in underdeveloped regions of the world. But the two are otherwise quite different in key respects. South African apartheid set out to exploit the labor of the rightless Black majority to create superprofits for the capitalist class. The founders of Israel sought to expel as much of the Arab majority as they could and make their profits by creating an almost all-Jewish working class.

Israel today is the most economically and socially developed capitalist nation-state in the Middle East, with a large proletariat and substantial middle-class layers. Its power is backed by the most formidable military in the region. And despite its original goal of expelling the Palestinians, they make up more than 20 percent of its citizens. Israeli capitalism exploits Jewish, immigrant and Palestinian labor, including from the Palestinian territory of the West Bank.

At the same time Israel is a bourgeois democracy, which affords working people a degree of political rights and space to organize and act in their class interests that for the most part does not exist elsewhere in the region. Like other developed capitalist nations, it is full of class antagonisms and social contradictions.

Apartheid: a state of 'white race'

Apartheid South Africa was not a nation in any meaningful sense but a state of the "white race." Less than 20 percent of the population living in the territories under its control — those defined by law as persons "of the white race" — had rights of citizenship. Blacks could not vote, change jobs at will or own land. They had to carry government-issued passes at all times and could not travel from one side of a town to the other without permission.

Anytime the government chose, it could send unruly African workers back to isolated Bantustans, so-called homelands in impoverished rural areas.



Yotam Ronen/Activestills.org

Working people are motor force of Palestinian liberation struggle, from fights against job and housing discrimination in Israel to demanding end to Israeli blockade of Gaza Strip. Above, March 1, 2013, protest in Bil'in village against separation wall Israeli government erected across West Bank to defend land grabs by settlers and maintain Jewish majority in Israel.

Apartheid prevented the formation of a modern nation. It institutionalized racial and tribal differentiations and blocked development of modern classes, including a hereditary working class among Blacks.

Following World War II, South Africa's rulers were largely successful in implementing their vision of this unique system of capitalist wage slavery under feudal-like forms of subjugation. Its success was its downfall. Such blatant and socially explosive contradictions became impossible to hold together.

The Israeli rulers' goal was very different: the removal of the Arab inhabitants and the setting up an all-Jewish nation from the Mediterranean to the Jordan River. Today they have abandoned this failed vision and instead are looking for ways to adjust their borders and maintain an Israel with a Jewish majority.

In the West Bank, the Israeli government has built a wall between Jewish and Arab areas, and constantly encroaches on Palestinian territory with settlements. It keeps the Gaza Strip blockaded, preventing Palestinians there from working in Israel and from normal trade and travel relations with the rest of the world. This reinforces their dependence on handouts from the United Nations and other agencies, stunting development of the class struggle.

Palestinian citizens of Israel face systematic discrimination in jobs, education, government services, land ownership and housing.

At the same time Jews and Arabs inside Israel can ride the same buses, go to the same universities, work in many of the same factories, belong to the same unions and fight side by side for better wages and conditions. Jewish and Palestinian citizens of Israel were both part of social protests over housing and inflation that swept the country in the summer of 2011.

Opens door to anti-Semitism'

Israeli law professor Amir Paz-Fuchs told the *Militant* by phone from Oxford, England, Dec. 30 that he supported the boycott movement when he lived in Israel out of "frustration."

"I felt like we had worked over the last 30 years to get the government to stop its most flagrant violations and have failed miserably," he said. "We thought anything you can do to get the Israeli government to change, we thank you for it."

But after taking a post at the University of Oxford he has begun to question the tactic. "A physics professor here refused to accept a doctoral student because he came from Israel," he said. "I'm probably one of the last people to bring up anti-Semitism, but it reeks of that."

Paz-Fuchs raises an important point. The Jewish question does not go away and capitalism remains a death trap for the Jewish people. Anti-Semitism, Jew-hatred and conspiracy theories, dredged up from the past, seek to get working people to scapegoat Jews for the crisis of capitalism and divert their attention from the real enemy: the bosses and their system of exploitation. Bending to anti-Semitism poses a danger to the working class and to the Palestinian struggle.

Joining debate 'more powerful'

In 2011 British novelist Ian McEwan was invited to Israel to accept the Jerusalem prize for literature. He refused to heed calls to boycott the invitation. Instead, in a speech widely reported on in Israel, McEwan denounced the Israeli government for the "continued evictions and relentless purchases of Palestinian homes in East Jerusalem, the process of the right of return granted to Jews but not to Arabs" as well as for turning Gaza into "a long-term prison camp." He also criticized Hamas for embracing "the nihilism of the suicide bomber, of rockets fired blindly into towns, and the nihilism of the extinctionist policy towards Israel."

"What he did was so much more powerful and took more courage than refusing to come," Paz-Fuchs said.

The boycott campaign is based on "the logic of pressure, not diplomacy, persuasion, or dialogue," Lisa Taraki, a leader of the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel, said in an August 2011 interview in al Jazeera. "No amount of 'education' of Israelis about the horrors of occupation and other forms of oppression seems to have turned the tide."

But just as there are two Americas — the America of the wealthy capitalist property owners and the America

Continued on page 9



Photos: Oren Ziv/Activestills.org

Israel's working class has been changing, including by addition of more and more immigrants. Notion that Israel is apartheid-like state deserving worldwide isolation turns away from class struggle and possibilities to strengthen fight against national oppression of Palestinians. Top, social protest by Jews and Palestinians in Haifa, Israel, Jan. 1, 2012. Bottom, Jewish, African and Arab workers on strike at Pri Galil food processing plant near Golan Heights, 2009.

‘We know we can count on revolutionary people of Cuba’

Below are excerpts from Thomas Sankara Speaks: The Burkina Faso Revolution: 1983-1987, *one of Pathfinder’s Books of the Month for January. In September 1984 Sankara, central leader of the revolution in Burkina Faso, headed a delegation to Cuba, where he received the Order of José Martí. The excerpt is from remarks at the ceremony by Armando Hart, a member of the Cuban Communist Party’s Political Bureau and minister of culture, followed by Sankara’s response. Copyright © 1988 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.*



Thomas Sankara, left, central leader of revolution in Burkina Faso from 1983 until his assassination in 1987, receives Order of José Martí from Cuban President Fidel Castro, Sept. 25, 1984.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

ARMANDO HART

Comrade Fidel;

Dear Comrade Captain Thomas Sankara, president of the National Council of the Revolution and head of state and government in Burkina Faso;

Dear comrades of the visiting delegation;

Comrades:

We have the honor this evening of carrying out the resolution of our Council of State, which confers on you, dear President Sankara, a high and distinguished decoration: the Order of José Martí. Our revolution reserves it, very selectively, as a well-deserved recognition of those who have rendered outstanding service to the cause of the people, to international relations between our countries; to dignity and honor; or to the struggle against imperialism, colonial and neocolonial domination, and for genuine national liberation. You, Comrade Thomas Sankara, display all these merits simultaneously.

First we should underscore the deep feeling of friendship and solidarity with which the leadership of our party, our government, and the entire Cuban people have been following the revolutionary events unfolding in the former Republic of Upper Volta, today know by its new name, Burkina Faso.

Revolutionary peoples, those who have experienced the hard struggle for independence, dignity, and development, have no difficulty understanding the efforts and battles of other fraternal peoples. They feel the need to immediately extend political support and solidarity — both of which are so important at all times, but even more so at the outset of a revolution. This is how we feel toward the people of Burkina Faso, toward the process of renewal and transformation taking place in their country and toward their outstanding leader, Captain Thomas Sankara. …

THOMAS SANKARA

Comrades:

Revolutionaries do not waste time hypocritically praising one another, a common practice among reactionaries.

The tribute that the people of Cuba have paid to my people, by conferring the highest distinction of the Cuban Revolution on me, is more than a symbolic gesture. It is a pledge of political support to my country, Burkina Faso, and its democratic and popular revolution. It is a firm pledge based on the memory of one of the greatest patriots not only of Cuba and Latin America, but of all corners of the world where peoples are fighting for freedom and independence.

This distinction demonstrates the Cuban people’s deep feelings of love for the Burkinabè people. Did not José Martí himself entitle his unforgettable work, “Love Is Repaid with Love”? José Martí, who at the early age of sixteen was deported from his country because of his revolutionary political ideas, felt the reality of militant solidarity among the peoples of the world in his blood and bones.

Peoples of the world love one another, and they know how to love. For nine years, Martí lived in the United States, Mexico, and Guatemala, where he became part of the people and earned their love. Without that profound love, when he was deported — it happened twice in his short life, in 1869 and 1879 — he could have been discouraged and his morale might have flagged. But in 1895 José Martí returned to his country and took up arms against the colonial oppressors. The man who died at Dos Ríos did so for the freedom of all the world’s peoples. He belongs to us all, to Cuba and to Burkina Faso.

The precious blood of heroes like him nurtures the peoples of the world and gives them the strength to wage ever more important battles. Comrade Fidel Castro and his comrades in the Sierra Maestra in 1956 were simply carrying forward the same revolutionary battle by the Cuban people for their full freedom. The revolutionaries and the Burkinabè people, who spent years combating reactionary and proimperialist regimes in Burkina Faso, were following in the footsteps of the battle waged by José Martí and they continue to do so today.

Cuba and Burkina Faso are so far and yet so near, so different and yet so similar, that only revolutionaries can understand the sincere love that pushes us irresistibly toward one another.

My country is small. It covers 274,000 square kilometers and has a population of seven million — seven million peasant men and women, who for centuries lived under conditions identical to, if not worse than, those endured by your people under the fascist Batista dictatorship. Safe drinking water, three meals a day, a clinic, a school, and a simple plow are still elements of an ideal in life that millions of Burkinabè have not yet achieved after a year of revolutionary power. I must explain that the National Council of the Revolution and the people of Burkina Faso conquered state power and wield it today under the weight of a heavy legacy from the past.

But there are positive examples such as yours that revive the morale of the less-determined, strengthen the revolutionary convictions of others, and spur people on to struggle against the centers of hunger, disease, and ignorance that still exist in our country.

We have been fighting, we fight, and we will continue to fight to create, with our own hands, the material foundations for our happiness. At all times in this fight, we know we can count on the firm support of the revolutionary people of Cuba and of all who have embraced José Martí’s ideals.

May José Martí hear me! May this medal guide me and my comrades in leading our revolution to victory at the service of the people who demand their share of happiness! It is no accident at all that our national slogan is captured in one you know so well:

Homeland or death, we will win!

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EDITORIAL

Capitalism threatens soil and worker

Every week new devastations are visited on working people and the air, soil, food and water we rely on, a result of the bosses' unrelenting drive for profit that motivates production under capitalism. This week 300,000 people in West Virginia had to forgo drinking, bathing, washing dishes and other use of the public water supply or face being poisoned by the owners of Freedom Industries, who let dangerous industrial chemicals leak into the Elk River.

Water authorities in Cincinnati were preparing to shut the intake valves on their system as the spill's chemical plume drifted by on the Ohio River Jan. 14.

The week before, derailed tank cars filled with highly volatile Bakken-shale crude oil exploded and burned for days outside Casselton, N.D. — by chance just a mile or two from town.

The bosses exploit labor without regard to the lives and limbs of working people, as they engage in cutthroat competition without concern for the social consequences of their "cost cutting" methods.

Capitalism, Karl Marx observed in 1867, works so the propertied classes accumulate profit "by simultaneously undermining the original sources of all wealth — the soil and the worker."

The bosses act as if dangers their system of production and distribution poses to both labor and nature are nobody's business but their own. Eastman Chemical Company, which manufactures the toxic brew dumped into the Elk River, refuses to make their files on the chemical's effects public, saying they're "proprietary."

For the working class, job safety, consumer protection and environmental protection are inextricably tied together. And what are often called environmental issues are not special "scientific" questions that can be abstracted from the class struggle.

"If we translate everything commonly thought of as an environmental issue into how to advance the protection of the working class, and how the working class can extend that protection to all, then we can hardly ever go wrong," Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, wrote in *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium*.

The source of ecological destruction and its effect on human life is capital's unquenchable search for profits through the exploitation of land and labor. It can be confronted only in struggle against the exploiting class in power, as working people organize and fight to wrest some control over working conditions and the processes of production.

It can only be stopped through the conquest of political power by the working class, whose objective interests lie not in the accumulation of personal wealth but in meeting the material and cultural needs of humanity today and for future generations.

Boss negligence poisons water in W.Va.

Continued from front page

tic forks and knives. It's a major inconvenience."

Boone is one of nine counties affected by the water ban Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin ordered. Schools shut down, restaurants closed, hotels canceled all reservations. Workers lost several days of wages. On Jan. 13, the ban began to be gradually lifted, but many will be without water for several more days.

On the morning of Jan. 9, the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection responded to complaints about a licorice-like odor from residents near a chemical storage site. When inspectors arrived at the plant they saw chemicals leaking from a ruptured tank. A concrete block dike, meant to serve as a secondary containment, also let the chemical spill through into the Elk River.

Up to 7,500 gallons of 4-methylcyclohexane methanol (MCHM) leaked into the river, a mile upstream of the intake pipes for the West Virginia American Water Company. MCHM is used to separate sellable coal from waste material attached to it.

Freedom Industries, the owner of the plant, processes and stores chemicals in 14 shoreline tanks 2.5 miles upstream from downtown Charleston, the state capital. The company had not reported any leak or accident. It took more than a day before the bosses held a 10-minute-long press conference Jan. 10, claiming they were focused on cleaning things up. They have made no comment since. The public relations firm they hired dropped them as a client Jan. 12.

'It's a wake-up call'

"We haven't really had much information about the chemical involved and how much has actually spilled," Bentley said. "It's a wake-up call, we've got to be careful with our water, we can't live without it. I don't like what's happening. I haven't heard much about health effects yet, but I'm sure that will come."

"There's not much known about this chemical," Elizabeth Scharman, director of the West Virginia Poison Center, told the *Charleston Gazette* Jan. 10. She said it could cause respiratory problems, burning of the eyes and skin, and prompt vomiting and diarrhea.

Only 200 of 84,000 in the federal Environmental Protection Agency's inventory are tested for effects on drinking water and other water quality.

By Jan. 12, 169 patients had been treated and released from area hospital emergency rooms, according to the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources. Ten were admitted for further observation.

"The valley where Charleston is situated is called 'chemical valley' because of all the chemical plants there," Cindy Rank, chair of West Virginia Highlands Conservancy's mining committee, told the *Militant* Jan. 13. "They are all located on river banks. There have been lots and lots of problems just in recent years."

In August 2008, two workers were killed after an explosion in a plant owned by Bayer CropScience, situated near Charleston on the Kanawha River. For several hours managers refused to tell emergency personnel the nature of the blast or what toxic chemical it released.

The plant produced methyl isocyanate, the same chemical that caused the industrial disaster in Bhopal, India, in December 1984 that resulted in the deaths of 15,000 people.

In January 2010, DuPont Corp.'s chemical manufacturing plant in Belle had three serious gas leaks within 33 hours that killed one worker when he was exposed to phospene, a gas used as a chemical weapon in World War II.

Following the Bayer plant leak the federal Chemical Safety Board issued a report in January 2011 with proposals for a new "Hazardous Chemical Release Prevention Program." The board repeated the proposals in September that year in a report on the DuPont leak.

In June 2011, the state's departments of Environmental Protection and Health and Human Resources decided not to implement them. Industry groups, including the American Chemistry Council, said they would "create unnecessary redundancies, as well as the imposition of additional economic burdens on local industries, communities and state governments."

Israel boycott

Continued from page 7

of the working class — there are two Israels. Similar class divisions exist within the Palestinian territories.

Viewing all Israelis — and Taraki means Israeli Jews — as enemies and Israel as a special apartheid state that must be destroyed, blocks Palestinians from winning potential allies among working people of all nationalities and religious beliefs. It can also provide cover for Jew-hatred to hide and fester, whatever the intentions of boycott supporters.

This can be seen in the boycott campaign against the G4S private security firm for equipping Israeli prisons in the West Bank. But G4S also equips prisons in Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt and in the United States. Are U.S. prisons, or those in Saudi Arabia for that matter, a better model for their treatment of workers and oppressed people behind bars than Israel?

The Israel boycott campaign stands in contrast to the revolutionary course followed during the fight against apartheid. The African National Congress won leadership of the vast majority of Africans in struggle on the basis of the 1955 Freedom Charter, which called for a South Africa that "belongs to all who live in it, Black and white." And they meant it. That course ensured victory by winning support among all nationalities, including a substantial number of Caucasians, to the side of the ANC.

But there is no revolutionary leadership in Israel or the Palestinian territories today. Hamas and Fatah, which claim to speak in the name of Palestinians, are bourgeois organizations that are obstacles to the struggle. They don't have a program that offers a way forward for the Palestinians, much less one that can attract allies among Jewish, African immigrants and other workers in Israel.

This doesn't mean the fights for Palestinian rights and against national oppression should wait for other developments in the class struggle. But it will not succeed in the long run unless it wins allies among working people inside Israel. And any advance in the Palestinian struggle must be championed by the labor movement in Israel if workers there are to break down divisions fostered by the bosses that keep them hamstrung.

Palestinian working people, not the Palestinian bourgeoisie, are the motor force for the liberation struggle and the fights for Palestinian rights that are going on today: from fights against job and housing discrimination inside Israel to the fight by Bedouins in the Negev to remain on the land they have lived on for decades, to fights against the West Bank wall and the economic embargo of Gaza, for water rights and to win freedom for Palestinian political prisoners in Israel's jails.

Because Israel is the most developed capitalist country in the region, with a powerful multinational working class, there are more opportunities than ever for advancing these fights.

But the boycott campaign's schema of Israeli apartheid leaves its supporters disoriented and unable to embrace real developments in the class struggle in Israel, like the ongoing fight of Sudanese and Eritrean immigrants for refugee status.

The road forward for working people is not the "destruction of Israel" — anymore than the "destruction" of the U.S. or Russia — but the forging of a revolutionary movement and a communist leadership of Jewish, Arab and immigrant workers and farmers that will advance the fight for Palestinian national rights and lead working people to take power out of the hands of the capitalist rulers in Israel and the region.

A revolutionary government will invite Palestinians scattered throughout the world to return to their homeland. And in the face of rising rightist movements as capitalism's crisis of production and trade deepens, it will open its doors to Jews fleeing reaction anywhere in the world.